NCA
VOC FOR IOP/FN
NEWS ANALYSIS NO. 1-0287
JOESEPH SULLIVAN MARCH 3, 1976

SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE HANOI CHALLENGE

ANNCR:

AN AUTHORITATIVE NORTH VIETNAMESE NEWSPAPER ARTICLE URGING ON INSURGENT GROUPS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA HAS DRAWN SHARP REACTION FROM NORTH VIETNAM'S NON-COMMUNIST NEIGHBORS. VOA NEWS ANALYST JOSEPH SULLIVAN HAS THESE OBSERVATIONS.

VOICE:

A RECENT COMMENTATOR ARTICLE IN THE NORTH VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST PARTY NEWSPAPER, "NHAN DAN," PROCLAIMS THAT COMMUNIST VICTORIES IN INDOCHINA HAVE CREATED THE IMPETUS FORE REVOLUTIONARY WARFARE ELSEWHERE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. IT SAYS THAT REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENTS AGAINST WHAT THE PAPER LABELS THE "PRO-AMERICAN REACTIONARY CLIQUES" IN THE REGION ARE GAINING MOMENTUM. "NHAN DAN" DOES NOT IDENTIFY SPECIFIC GOVERNMENTS IN ITS CHARACTERIZATION OF "REACTIONARY CLIQUES." BUT IT DOES SINGLE OUT INDONESIA FOR ATTACK, CONDEMING JAKARTA'S INTERVENTION IN THE TIMOR DISPUTE AND INDONESIA'S ALLEGED ATTEMPTS TO CREATE A MILITARY BLOCK IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

THE "NHAN DAN" ARTICLE APPEARED WITHIN A WEEK OF THE BALI SUMMIT OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS, WHICH HELD OUT THE OLIVE BRANCH OF PEACE TO THE COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS IN INDOCHINA. REACTION FROM THREE OF THE FIVE ASEAN MEMBER STATES WAS SWIFT AND UNEQUIVOCAL. PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT FERDINAND MARCOS TOLD NEWSMEN IN MANILA THAT THE NON-ALIGNED NATIONS OF SOUTHEAST ASIA ARE READY TO DEFEND THEIR TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. INSTEAD OF

CARRYING ON A WAR OF WORDS, MISTER MARCOS SAID, THE NATIONS OF THE REGION SHOULD DEVOTE THEIR ENERGIES TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. AND HE CALLED ON THE INDOCHINESE STATES TO PUT ASIDE THEIR BELIEF THAT ASEAN IS A TOOL OF THE WESTERN POWERS.

IN JAKARTA, INDONESIAN FOREIGN MINISTER ADAM MALIK CALLED THE HANOI ARTICLE "A DANGEROUS AGITATION" AT A TIME WHEN ASEAN HAS OFFERED FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION TO THE COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS IN INDOCHINA. SINGAPORE FOREIGN MINISTER SINNATHAMBY RAJARATHAM, IN COMMENTING ON THE ARTICLE, ALSO EMPHASIZED THAT ASEAN IS NOT OPPOSED TO THE COMMUNIST COUNTRIES OF INDOCHINA AND WANTS TO LIVE IN PEACE WITH THEM. NONETHELESS, HE SAID, THE COUNTRIES IN THE REGION HAVE THE RIGHT, IF THEY CHOOSE, TO REJECT COMMUNISM. THE ASEAN MEMBERS COUNTRIES, MISTER RAJARATHAM ADDED, ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO PREVENT THEIR DESTRUCTION.

ASEAN HAS INDEED LEFT THE DOOR OPEN FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE INDOCHINESE STATES. AT BALI, ITS MEMBERS CONCLUDED A TREATY OF AMITY AND COOPERATION AND DISCUSSED THE NEED FOR POSSIBLE BI-LATERAL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS TO STEM COMMUNIST-LED INSURGENCIES. BUT, AT THE SAME TIME, THEY AGREED THAT THE NEW COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS IN INDOCHINA WOULD BE WELCOME TO SIGN THE AMITY TREATY.

PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY ASIAN LEADERS SINCE THE END OF THE VIETNAM WAR HAVE LEFT LITTLE DOUBT THAT THE QUESTION OF NORTH VIETNAM'S INTENTIONS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA ARE VERY MUCH ON THEIR MINDS. AND, IN THIS REGARD, THE "NHAN DAN"

ARTICLE PROVIDES AT LEAST A SMALL GLIMPSE INTO HANOI'S TACTICS. MOST UNSETTLING, PERHAPS, IS THE FACT THAT THE ARTICLE LAUDS THE LONG, BLOODY WAR IN VIETNAM AS A ROAD TO SEIZING POLITICAL POWER. AND CERTAINLY NORTH VIETNAM'S NEIGHBORS WILL BE WATCING TO SEE HOW FAR HANOI IS PREPARED TO GO IN SUPPORT OF WHAT "NHAN DAN " CALLS THE "HARSH AND COMPLEX STRUGGLE" WITH NON-COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA.

-0-

GH/RTD